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Expedited Procedure
Examining Group 1713

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IN THE U.S. PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE DEC 16 1998

Applicants: Yasuyuki TANAKA et al.

Serial No.: 08/941,132

Group: 1713

Filed: September 30, 1997

Examiner: F. Zitomer

For: MODIFIED NATURAL RUBBER

GROUP 1700

[Handwritten signatures and initials, including "12-18-98"]

REPLY UNDER 37 C.F.R. 1.116

Assistant Commissioner for Patents
Washington, D.C. 20231

December 11, 1998

Sir:

In response to the Examiner's Office Action dated August 11, 1998, the following amendments and remarks are respectfully submitted in connection with the above-identified application.

IN THE CLAIMS

Claim 1 (4x Amended). A modified natural rubber obtained by a modification of a deproteinized natural rubber having a nitrogen content of less than 0.10% by weight; wherein said modification is either or both of:

A) [carried out by] graft copolymerizing said deproteinized natural rubber with an organic compound having an unsaturated bond selected from methacrylic acid, acrylic acid, methyl methacrylate, methyl acrylate, 2-hydroxyethyl